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THE GRAND HAVEN NEWS.

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HOW I FIRST MET MY WIFE.

There was always a mystery hanging about a certain way that Morgan had, and in which he was always joined honestly by his wife—my own cousin May Stevens, that had been—a way that troubled my curiosity much until the one eventful evening that I was satisfied by hearing the reason why.

It was simply this: That every time a word was spoken that led to the period when Charley Morgan first met my cousin May, they would both laugh very heartily, but would always refuse to tell at what they laughed. This was certainly very provoking, and I had little hesitation in telling them so—not once but many times—at which they always ended by kissing each other, and looking very affectionate.

I determined to have a solution of the matter; if for no other reason than it worried me. I am but a woman, and having pleaded to the possession of curiosity, I see no reason why sometimes it should not be indulged. With this resolution, I set forth one evening, when we three, Morgan, May, and myself, were drawn up before the fire, and early settled for a talk. There was no time for mincing matters was my first idea, and with this thought I dashed boldly out with:

"Mr. Morgan"—I usually call him Charley; but I was desirous of showing that I was really in earnest. "Mr. Morgan, why do you always laugh and look at May when the subject of your first meeting with her is spoken of?"

This, I was sure, was a simple question; and yet, instead of answering it in a simple way, they laughed as if the words I had just spoken were the very best joke in the world. I could do nothing, of course, but look grave and solemn, which in a few moments brought them both looking the same way, and then May spoke to me seriously and said:

"Cousin Jane, you take our laughing much more earnestly than I thought you would. It is only a little memory between Charley and I that brings the laugh; to us it is a droll remembrance, but, perhaps, in telling it there would be nothing to amuse any one."

The explanation brought back my good humor in an instant, and with a smile I said:

"Now, May, this is really unkind of you, for so long have you excited my curiosity, that even were the story not worth telling you should tell it."

"Well cousin Jane shall have that story, May; I will tell it myself to her."

At this declaration I was surprised to see May flush up to a bright red, and break out rather vehemently with:

"No, Charley, that is really too bad. You shall not do it, sir. If cousin Jane is to have the story, I will tell her myself." And then, after a pause, she said, "When we are alone."

"You shall do no such thing, Madame May," was Charley's laughing response, "you shall do no such a thing. This time I shall have my own way, and cousin Jane shall not have her curiosity excited any more without being satisfied."

I saw there was to be a discussion on that point, but I knew in some way Charley was to come off victor, so I, merely saying that I would be back in a few minutes, stepped out of the room and walked about the garden until I felt sure the point was settled, when I went back and found Charley and May looking as happy as birds, and laughing the old laugh as usual. As I entered, Charley drew up the rocking chair, and, after seeing me safely deposited in its depths, said:

"Now, cousin Jane, I shall tell you the story about how I first met my wife."

"It is just five years ago this summer that I was granted exemption for a month from my desk, and went down with my old chum, Horace Hyatt, to his father's, in old Monmouth, the garden of that unjustly abused State, New Jersey. I should never have forgotten that visit, even though I had not there met with an adventure that had its influence on the whole future of my life. I should remember it for the real, true hospitality, the solid, old-time comfort of the farm, and the quiet way in which, within a few days after my arrival, I was put into possession of it and made to feel that it all belonged to me to do just what I pleased with. There was plenty of fish, and we fished; plenty of woodcock, and we shot. All this shall be spoken of with a proviso. I say we—by which, let it be understood, I do not mean Horace's twin sisters, Carrie and Nettie, as having participated in all these sports. They rode, to be sure, and charmingly they did it; they fished, and I am obliged to confess they were luckier than their guest. But they did not shoot, though I shall not exult over their lack of this accomplishment—they were charming enough without. I am sure I shall excite no jealousy by declaring that, with one exception, which I shall not mention here, Carrie and Nettie Hyatt were the most charming girls that I had ever seen, and I was just hesitating as to which of them I should fall desperately in love with, when my calculations were all disturbed by an accident—for so I suppose I must call it—though really seeming like a special Providence What this was, I shall tell in the best way I know how.

For some days after my arrival at the farm, my curiosity had been much excited by the young ladies upon one schoolmate of their own, May Stevens, by name, who was, according to their highly-colored account, the most perfect thing in the shape of a woman then living. I tried to persuade myself that nothing in that line could surpass Nettie and Carrie, but still the reputation of this May Stevens haunted me, and came like a shadow across my new-born passion. I formed at last, an imaginary May Stevens, and do what I would the figure was with me. At last I was worked into an agony of curiosity, and trembled with some great purpose which should bring before me the object of my thoughts and of the two sisters' continued conversation. In what this would have ended it is impossible for me at this time to say, had I not one morning, as I entered the breakfast-room, heard the startling words from Nettie:

"And so she is coming at last. I'm so glad."

Whether it was the train of my tho'ts upon that point at the moment, I can not say, but I knew directly the whole matter. I saw Carrie with an open letter in her hand, and, coupling it with Nettie's words, I knew that the hitherto only heard of May Stevens was about to become a reality. I had no need to ask questions. All the information was proffered. May Stevens—the incomparable May—was to spend a month at Hyatt's, and they were to expect her at any moment, though, as the letter read, she might not be down for a week to come. A week—it was an age, a century, and I was in a flutter of excitement. My long standing passion, of nearly two weeks' duration, for Carrie was forgotten in an instant, and my whole mind was absorbed in making the best figure possible before this new queen. With this idea I began to look into my wardrobe. I had come down with sufficiet clothes to answer all ordinary purposes, including, of course, Carrie and Nettie; but this new goddess was certainly worthy of a new rig on my part, and certainly should have it. This resolution was made within fifteen minutes after hearing the announcement of her intended coming, and before two hours had gone by, I was whizzing on my way to carry out that resolve. My choicest morsel of wardrobe should be offered at the shrine of May Stevens.

I had absented myself on the plea of sudden memory of a business neglected, and faithfully promised Nettie and Carrie that the next day should see me down at Hyatt's again, to stay out the month that May Stevens, the wonderful, was about to pass with them.

The racking of brain that day to create a grand *assemble* of costume—something beyond all criticism, that should at first glance strike the beholder with silent admiration—was indeed terrible.—The labor of writing "Paradise Lost" was nothing to it. It was early in the day when I arrived at my city rooms, and for six hours I dressed and re-dressed, compared and rejected and selected; and at the end of that time I had laid out those portions of my wearable goods in which I had decided to make my first appearance before May Stevens; it wanted still several hours to sunset. Having got through the great object of my visit, I thought it would not be a bad idea for me to take the last train and return the same night to Hyatt's, instead of remaining over till morning. No sooner said than done. I packed my habiliments and away I went, whizzing and puffing over an uninterested road in provocation of sleep. So I found it when the shades of evening fell, for to the best of my recollection, I was in the very midst of a dream; in which May Stevens was attired in book muslin and pale blue satin, appeared on a purple cloud and admiringly inquired who my tailor was? Just as I was about to inform her there came a crash, and for a moment I was not certain whether it was the cloud that had exploded, or myself that had torn some portion of my apparel that was overstrained. It required but a moment to awaken me to the fact that both presumptions were wrong. It was our train—2:26—that ran off the track, smashing things generally, and spilling the contents of several baggage cars along the road, to say nothing of frightening half a hundred passengers into a condition bordering on lunacy. This was a pretty state of things, and to make it still worse I was eight miles from my destination, though as it afterward appeared, not a mile from the next village where, I heard it canvassed, a tavern, supper and beds could be had.

I was disposed to make myself agreeable, and accordingly rendered all the assistance in my power to the unprotected females, for which I got my reward on arriving at the haven of refuge—the promised tavern—by being informed that such a thing as a bed for the night was an impossible idea, and that with some twenty more of the male gender, I must be content with chairs, while the beds were appropriated to the gentler sex. Slightly disgusted, I swallowed my supper and looked out upon the night. It was a beautiful moonlight, and verging on to ten o'clock. By Jove, I would walk over to Hyatt's. No sooner said than done. Giving my carpet bag into the landlord's hands for punctual delivery at Hyatt's next morning at my expense, I set forth. Eight miles is a trifle, and just as my watch marked the quarter after midnight I went up the lane that led up to the house. They were early to bed and early up. I walked round the house trying the doors; each and every one was fastened. It was no consequence; my bedroom window opened on the roof of the piazza; I would not disturb the house by knocking; a bit of climbing would do the business, and should it be fastened I wol'd tap and awaken Horace, who was my room-mate and bed-fellow. The thing was executed as soon as thought of, and my hand laid on the window, which yielded, and I stood in my own room. By the moonlight which streamed in, I saw that the bed was occupied, and by the heavy breathing I knew that Horace was in a sleep. I would not, therefore, awaken him, but save the story of my mishap for the following day. With this resolution I slipped quietly into bed, and in three minutes was oblivious. What ought I to have dreamed that night?—But I shall not anticipate. I lay facing the windows as the sun peeped up above the distant hills and scattered the gray mists of the morning. My bed-fellow was breathing heavily, but it was broad daylight and there was no more sleep in me, so I was determined Horace should wake up and hear the story of the railroad break-down. I turned quickly and gave the sleeper a sudden shake. As rapidly as my own motion my bed fellow, who had lain with his back toward me, sprang to a sitting position.

There are such surprises as are without terror, which deprive us of our speech, until the brain has time to act and reason. Such surprises do not generate screams and faints. They are expressed by open-mouthed and silent wonder. This was the case with myself and bed-fellow, as we sat upright and stared. Right by my side, with her face within two feet of my own sat a young woman, not more than seventeen, with great, dark, hazel eyes, and such great masses of brown curls, tucked away under the neatest night-cap that ever was. She had gathered the bed-clothes with a spasmodic jerk up about her throat, and with the most rigid astonishment looked as tho' doubting whether she was sleeping or waking, gazed steadily in my eyes. Memory serves a man but little in such cases, but if my memory serves me right, it was I who first spoke. I blurted out with:

"How came you here?"

The figure stared still in speechless astonishment, but in a moment, as though awakened from its stupefaction spoke:

"Are you Charles Morgan?"

I answered in the affirmative.

"Well, then, Mr. Morgan," said the figure, by this time calm, and with quite as much dignity as though in the drawing-room, "I am May Stevens, and I was put in this room after an unexpected arrival. Horace had gone over to a neighbor's, a few miles off, before I got here, and was not to return till to day. That is how I was put in this room."

So here I was, sitting *vis a vis* to this May Stevens, that mythical lady, for the first meeting with whom I intended to get up such a superlative toilet! A nice style of introduction, and a nice style of of toilet! And she—she by this time was as cool as the thirty-first of December, and sat looking me right in the eyes as I made some rambling explanation of my being in that extraordinary position. It was a lame explanation, wonderfully mixed up with irrelevant matter, and stammered and stuttered through in a way that should have disgusted any sensible person. She seemed to be seriously pondering during the recital, and, at its end, looking at me as though asking the most simple question in the world, said:

"What's to be done?"

"Let me jump out of the window as I came in," I said, in a sickly tone of voice, for the thought came to me that, to achieve this end, I must make some desperate display of myself in a style of costume which I deprecated. She relieved me instantly:

"No, that will not do; there are people moving about, and you will be seen."

It was now my turn to stammer out:

"What's to be done?" For I saw that the little hazel-eyed girl was superior to me in presence of mind and energy of action. She did not wait long to answer my question.

"You must lie still here until I get up. When I have left the room you can rise, dress, and go away at the first opportunity," was her response, delivered in a quiet and business-like manner.

And so I did. Under May Stevens' command, I buried my head under her bed-clothes, and kept well covered till I heard the retreating footsteps on the stairs, which was but a few moments, tho' it seemed an age; then, with a desperate bound, I sprang from the bed, and turned the key upon the departed one. It was the quickest dressing I ever made, and I will venture to say that no man ever sneaked out of his own apartments more stealthily than I did at that time.

That morning we met. May Stevens and I, at the breakfast-table—I in the character of the newly-arrived that morning—and were formally introduced, during the ceremony of which we astonished every one present, and planted a thorn of wonder in the sides of Nettie and Carrie, by bursting simultaneously into a hearty laugh, which we never fail to repeat when the memory of our first meeting comes up.

And now cousin Jane, you have the whole story of how I first met my wife.

A Chapter on Human Nature.

A correspondent of the Blair County (Pa.) *Whig* furnishes that paper with the particulars of the following incident, of which he was an eye-witness. It occurred a few weeks ago, on the line of great internal improvements in that State.

At the point on this side of the mountain, where occurred the transhipment of passengers from the West, was moored a canal-boat, waiting the arrival of the train, before starting on their way through to the East. The Captain of the boat—a tall and sun-browned, rough, and sometimes profane man—stood on his craft, superintending the labors of his men, when the cars came in, and a dozen minutes after, a party of half-a-dozen gentlemen came along, and deliberately walked up to the captain, and thus addressed him:

"Sir, we wish to go East, but our further progress to-day depends upon you. In the cars we have just left, there is a sick man whose presence is disagreeable. We have been appointed a committee by the passengers, to ask that you deny this man a passage on your boat; if he goes, we remain. What say you?"

By this time, others had come from the cars.

"Gentlemen," said the captain, "I have heard the passengers through your committee. Has the sick man any representatives here? I wish to hear both sides of the question."

To this unexpected interrogatory there was no answer; when, without a moments pause, the captain crossed to the car, and, entering, beheld a poor, emaciated, worn-out creature, whose life was eaten up by the fell destroyer, consumption. The man's head was bowed in his hands, and he was weeping. The captain advanced and spoke kindly to him.

"Oh, sir," said the trembling invalid, looking up, his face lit up with hope and expectation, "are you the captain, and will you take me? The passengers shun me, and are so unkind. You see, sir, I am dying; but oh! if I can live to see my mother, I shall die happy. She lives at Burlington, sir, and my journey is more than half performed. I am a poor printer, and the only child of her in whose arms I would wish to die."

"You shall go," said the bluff captain, with an oath, "If I lose every passenger for the trip."

By this time the whole crowd of passengers were grouped around the boat, with their baggage piled on the tow-path, and they themselves waiting for the decision of the captain before engaging their passage.

A moment more, and that decision was made known, as they beheld him come from the cars with the sick man cradled in his strong arms. Pushing directly through the crowd with his dying burden, he ordered the mattress to be laid in the choicest part of the cabin, where he laid the invalid with all the care of a parent. Then scarcely deigning to cast a look at the astonished crowd alongside, he shouted loudly to his hands:

"Push off the boat!"

But a new feeling seemed to possess the amazed passengers. With one common impulse, each seized his own baggage, and then walked immediately on board the boat.

In a short time another committee was sent to the captain, asking his presence in the cabin.

He went, and from their midst there arose a white haired man, who, with tear drops starting from his eyes, told that rough captain that he had taught them a lesson—that they felt humble before him, and they asked his forgiveness. It was a touching scene. The fountain of true sympathy was broken in the heart of nature, and the waters welled up, choking the utterance of all present.

In an instant a purse was made up for the sick man, with a "God-speed" for his welfare.

The true-hearted captain of the boat was Samuel D. Carnes, and the incident is worth remembering.

PRICES CURRENT.—The application of adjectives in the newspaper prices current, is singularly appropriate and amusing.—Take, for instance, the following quotation: "Yesterday and to-day butter has been *falling*, flour is *rising*, cheese is *lively*, poultry rather *dull*, beef is *quiet*, and pork *firm*, eggs are *brisk*, codfish is *easy*, and mackerel is *looking up*, salmon is *steady*, and herrings *going off* fast in small lots. Provisions, in general, *going down*."

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

— Eternity—An ocean without a shore.

— Excess is incompatible with health and happiness.

— The lady who fell back on her dignity, came near breaking it.

— When an actor brings down the house, where does he take it?

— At Newcastle the people must be a youthful set, for all are miners.

— "Come out of the wet," as the shark said, when it took in the little fishes.

— Young lovers are called turtles, and they are generally called green turtles.

— It has been ascertained that the man who held on to the last was a shoemaker.

— When does the farmer act with great rudeness towards his corn? When he pulls his ears.

— A traveller says that Mount Vesuvius never sleeps. It must be sleepy, for it is always yawning.

— If you were obliged to swallow a man, whom would you prefer to swallow? A little London porter.

— An old bachelor says that during leap year the ladies jump at every offer of marriage—hence the term.

— To prevent the smell of cooking in the house, have nothing for breakfast, and warm it over for dinner and supper.

— The young married couple who thought they could live on love and moonshine, find some virtue in baked beans.

— "What's whiskey bringing?" inquired a dealer in the poison. "Bringing men to the gallows," was the reply.

— A flirt is like a dipper attached to a hydrant—every one is at liberty to drink from it, but no one desires to carry it away.

— Pleasant—After writing a note in a hurry, you sieze hold of the inkstand instead of the sand-box, and give it a finishing touch!

— An Emeralder, in writing a sketch of his life, says he early ran away from his father, because he discovered he was only his uncle.

— A bashful printer refused a situation in a printing office where females were employed, saying that he never *set up* with a girl in his life.

— The darkest scene we ever saw was a darkey in a dark cellar, with an extinguished candle, looking for a black cat that was not there.

— Who were the first newspaper subscribers mentioned in Scripture? Cain and Joshua; for Cain took (A) *Bell's Life*, and Joshua ordered the *Sun*.

— A little boy asked the razor-strop man if he could sharpen his appetite.—The razor-strop man at once stropped him so severely that the urchin cut off.

— "Porter," asked an old lady, of an Irish railway porter, "when does the nine o'clock train leave?" "Sixty minutes past eight, mum," was Mike's reply.

— A henpecked husband writes: "Before marriage, I fancied wedded life wo'd be all sunshine; but afterward I found out that it was all moonshine."

— The man who imagined himself wise because he detected some typographical errors in a newspaper, has gone east to get a perpendicular view of the rainbow.

— A cotemporary speaks of "the graceful figures of childhood." Blinkins says that the figures at the bottom of childhood's shoe and clothing bills are not so graceful.

— "Never be cast down by trifles," said Dr. S——; but soon after being thrown upon his back by treading upon a piece of orange peel, he slightly modified his advice.

— Deaf Lady—"What's his name?"
Young Lady—"Augustus Tyler."
Deaf Lady—"Bless me, what a name, 'Bust-his Biler.' Eliza, you must be making fun of me."

— Women are called "softer sex," because they are so easily humbugged.—Out of one hundred girls, ninety-five wo'd prefer ostentation to happiness—a dandy husband to a mechanic.

— "Jo, how many scruples is there in a drachm?"
"Don't know, zur."
"Well, remember, there's eight."
"Eight, pooh, dad always takes his without *no scruples!*"

— A printer not long ago, being rejected by his sweet heart, went to the printing office, and tried to commit suicide with the shooting-stick, but the thing wouldn't go off. The *devil*, wishing to pacify him, told him to look into the sanctum, where the editor was writing duns to delinquent subscribers. He did so, and the effect was magical. He said the picture of despair reconciled him to his fate.